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PRESS RELEASE

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U.S. BORDER PATROL AGENTS SEIZE 1.4 MILLION DOLLARS WORTH OF COCAINE

SAN CLEMENTE, CALIFORNIA: Border Patrol Agents working at the San Clemente Checkpoint seized approximately 44 pounds of cocaine earlier this afternoon. The cocaine, which is valued at approximately 1.4 million dollars, was discovered in a 1993 Mercury Villager concealed in a fabricated dashboard compartment.

The cocaine was being smuggled by two female Mexican nationals. The smugglers, both of Sinaloa, Mexico, legally entered the United States earlier today as non-immigrant visitors. The women had been attempting to drive through the checkpoint, when agents recognized their nervous demeanor and referred them to a secondary inspection. A drug-sniffing dog led agents to the dashboard, where a total of 14 bricks of cocaine had been concealed. The cocaine weighed approximately 44 pounds and is valued at \$1,388,800.

This is a significant interdiction due to the fact that this single seizure has exceeded the total amount of cocaine seized in the 1999 fiscal year. Narcotic smugglers, in a seemingly tireless effort to avoid detection, often utilize different ploys. In recent drug seizures, women have been used as the smugglers. The two female smugglers, the vehicle and cocaine were remanded to the custody of the Drug Enforcement Administration.

No further information is available at this time.